

Intel Schools of Distinction Awards Frequently Asked Questions

Click on the question to link to the answer or scroll down.

Technical Questions

- How often can I come back to the application?
- What do I do when my screen freezes?

General Questions

- How will I know my application has been received?
- When will I be notified of the results?
- How can I use the award?
- How do I update contact information after submitting my application?
- Who judges the applications?
- Will I receive an explanation of the review of my application?
- Can I use this application to receive a grant from the Intel Foundation?

Specific Questions on the Application:

- I am a K-8 school – what level do I chose? (Question 2)
- How do I calculate the student to teacher ratio? (Question 31)
- Our private school does not collect standardized state test data, what student assessment data can I include? (Questions 39-43)

Eligibility

- Who qualifies to apply?
- Can an informal education program apply?
- Can a virtual, internet-based school apply?
- Can a home school apply?
- Can I apply if I have previously applied?
- Can an international school apply?
- Can I compete in both science and mathematics?
- I am a school within a school; can I apply?
- Can I apply if I am only a K-3 school?
- Do you accept applications in additional subject categories?
- Can a district apply?
- Can our district submit similar applications for individual schools, or one application for multiple schools?
- Can I apply as a nonprofit?

Technical Questions

Q: Are there a limited number of times that I can leave and come back to the application as I complete it?

A: No. You may close the application and reopen it as many times as needed. However, keep in mind that once you press the final submission button, you have officially entered the competition, and you will no longer have access to edit it.

Q: Sometimes as I am working on the application, I find that the screen has frozen and I need to log-on again. Is there something wrong with the website or my computer?

A: The most likely reason for this to happen is that you have exceeded the amount of time the webpage remains active. In other words, the system has "timed out." It is for this reason that we strongly recommend you make a paper copy of the application and refer to that as you fashion your answers as a word processed document. It is then a simple matter to log-on and copy-and-paste your answers directly from your electronic document into the application.

Eligibility Questions

Q: How do I qualify to enter this awards competition?

A: You are qualified to enter this awards competition if your school is a K-12 public, private, charter, parochial, Department of Defense, Bureau of Indian Affairs or magnet school. In order to be able to judge the impact of your school's program, we need to see at least three years of results data, whether NCES or other comparable data. We encourage you to apply when your school has been in existence long enough for this to be possible. Please refer to the application eligibility rules for a complete listing of awards competition details.

Q: Can we submit an application for our informal education program?

A: The Intel Schools of Distinction awards best practices in formal education.

Q: Can I apply as a virtual, internet-based school?

A: Virtual schools are eligible to apply so long as they are fully accredited schools offering a comprehensive program and diploma upon successful completion of the program. The application does weigh the relationships that the school forms with parents, businesses and community members as part of the judging process. A virtual school can address the ways in which it builds and sustains its virtual community of students and faculty and how it connects that community to the external world in addition to more directly responding to the questions on the application.

Q: Can I apply as a home school?

A: We appreciate your request, but because our corporate education program focuses on the types of schools that are defined in the competition, we have decided to remain consistent with our award program. Home schools would therefore not be eligible to apply.

Q: My school entered the competition last year but was not selected. Can we enter in 2012?

A: Please refer to the overview page for a full description. We encourage all past applicants who were not selected as category finalists or winners to enter the 2012 competition. Past finalists need to wait one year before reapplying. For example, schools that were finalists in 2011 can apply again for the 2013 competition. Past winners are not eligible to apply for three full years of the program. If you were a winner of the Intel Schools of Distinction in 2008 or earlier, you are eligible to apply, but must apply in a different category.

Intel Schools of Distinction Awards Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: Does the Intel Schools of Distinction recognize schools outside the United States?
A: The Intel Schools of Distinction awards program currently recognizes outstanding achievement in the United States only. We continue to consider expansion of the program for future years.
- Q: Can my school complete an application for both Mathematics and Science categories?
A: While we know that excellent schools might be eligible in both categories, our competition requires that each school enter just one category – grades K-5, 6-8, or 9-12. I think this answer needs to say “enter just one category – math or science – and just one grade levels K-5, 6-8 or 9-12.
- Q: Our school is housed within a larger school but our program is completely separate. Are we still eligible to enter our application?
A: A school-within-a-school is eligible to apply and should enter as an individual entry separate from the larger school. You must show that your program is fully independent from the larger school. If you have a separate NCES number for your school-within-a-school, please provide that within the application. If students only attend your school-within-a-school for a specific program because they are taking classes at the other school(s), you do not qualify as a separate school
- Q: In past years the competitions included a greater number of categories and additional subject areas. Why has it changed?
A: Each year we review our programs to ensure alignment with our education mission and goals. Starting in 2007, we elected to pursue a focus on science and math and 21st Century learning environments that closely ties to our philanthropic mission.
- Q: Can we apply if our program includes kindergarten through grade 3?
A: Yes, K-3 grade schools are welcome to apply. We have three levels of competition for each category, K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. Each school will need to designate the level they are entering when completing the application.
- Q: Can our school district (as a whole) apply?
A: The Intel Schools of Distinction awards competition is open to applications from individual schools only.
- Q: I work for a school district that implements similar curricula, instructional strategies, student support systems, etc. across all of our schools. We believe that multiple schools should be considered for an award. Can we submit similar applications for individual schools or one application for multiple schools?
A: The objective of the Schools of Distinction competition is to identify schools whose outstanding math or science program offer lessons from which other individual schools in the United States and its territories can benefit regardless of their size or level of administrative support at the district level. Applications will be accepted only from individual schools.
- Q: Can our non-profit education organization apply?
A: The Intel Schools of Distinction provides awards to individual schools for best practices. Organizations, foundations and companies are not eligible to apply.

General Questions

- Q: How will I know that my application has been submitted into the system?
A: You will receive an email confirmation when your application has been submitted. If you do not receive a confirmation within 24 hours of your submission, notify the webmaster at schoolsofdistinction@ce.uoregon.edu.

Intel Schools of Distinction Awards Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If our school is selected, how will we be notified?

A: All applicants will be notified of their status through email. We plan to notify applicants of their status in April 2012.

Q: If a school is chosen as a finalist, how may they use their award?

A: There are no specific restrictions on the grant except that the money must be used in support of academic programs. Common uses of the award include funding teacher professional development and purchasing student instructional materials.

Q: How can I update my personal information or change the contact name once I have submitted my application?

A: Please send any contact information updates to:
schoolsofdistinction@ce.uoregon.edu

Q: Who will be judging the applications?

A: Your applications will be judged by teams composed of experienced education professionals and category content specialists selected by Intel. How you present your school and the information you provide in your application will be the primary factor determining how well you do in the judging process.

Q: If my entry is not chosen as a finalist in my category, will I be told why?

A: All applicants will be notified of their status, but unfortunately we are not able to provide judging information to applicants due to the large number of participants.

Q: Can the Intel Schools of Distinction program provide me a grant for my school?

A: The Intel Schools of Distinction is an awards program. We do not offer grants separate from the awards process. For awards categories and criteria please visit the Application process and eligibility page at:
<http://www.intel.com/education/schoolsofdistinction/application.htm>

Application Questions

Q: Our school is a K-8; do I chose elementary or middle school? (Question 2)

A: This is your choice. Pick the level in which you believe you are the strongest and have data to support it.

Q: Are all certified teachers in our school, no matter their educational role, to be included when calculating the student-teacher ratio? (Question 31)

A: When reporting the student-teacher ratio, please include all certified staff in the school (excluding paraprofessionals) who work with students.

Q: Our school is not a public school and does not assess our students learning using standardized or state mandated tests. What student achievement data should we report? (Questions 39-43)

A: Our goal in asking for student test scores is to understand how your school is succeeding in teaching all students. We would like any data you can provide that shows achievement and continuous improvement.